1: Warner E-5 (1926-1929)1937
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614 628 583 601 The Wangurri organized a raid, killed many of the Warumeri men and took the women for themselves. The children who were born from the Warumeri fathers before the capture of their mothers by the other clan were called gatu by the men who had captured their mothers, and wawa or yukiyuko by these men's sons, who were their progeny through proper marriage. The sons of these women by Wangurri fathers were also called wawa or yukiyuko by the Wangurri sons, not only because the fathers reckoned their relationship through the clan but because the mother too was in the right relationship.

In addition to reckoning kin as above, the Wangurri sons, by tracing the relationship of the Warumeri sons of these women through the mother, would call them brothers, just as the new husbands of these women would apply the term gatu to these children. The same procedure would be true of the Warumeri for the Wangurri offspring. Thus, instead of strengthening the differences between two clans, the tracing of descent through the mother for outside clans has broken down the ordinary clan walls and has done much to hasten the process of consolidation that can be seen taking place at the present time between two clans which possess contiguous territories and hold most of their totems in common. A Wangurri man is now head of both clans.

614 582 Below are listed the clans which usually intermarry. This does not mean that these clans do not also marry into other groups. It is felt, however, according to my informants, that the clans listed in the right-hand column are the ones into which those listed in the left-hand column prefer to marry.

Barlmawi	⟷	Liaalaomir
Birkili	⟷	Perango, Djirin, Gwiyula
Bringel	⟷	Mandelpui, Liaalaomir, Wawilak
Daiuror	⟷	Liagaomir, Naladaer, Djirin, Liaalaomir
Djawark	⟷	Darlwongo
Djirin	⟷	Warumeri, Birkili, Daiuror, Wangurri
Gunalbingu	⟷	Kurkamarnapia
Gwiyamil	⟷	Liagaomir, Liaalaomir
Gwiyula	⟷	Birkili
Karmalanga	⟷	Burera (tribe), Wulkara
Kiki	⟷	Maradunggimi
Kolpa	⟷	Perango, Murru
Komaits	⟷	Riraidjingo
Liagaomir	⟷	Wulkara, Gwiyamil, Daiuror
Lummami	⟷	Riraidjingo

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593 835 copulating with their wives, thereby forcing the wawa to defend his brother from their vengeance.

607 Because all of the members of a group of brothers are all dué to the same galle and the women thereby are the potential wives of all yukiyukos of this group, there is a strong tribal rule that no yukiyuko can talk to or be near wawa's wives, but wawa can talk to and be near yukiyuko's. (This would not be true of a woman beyond the age when she would be sexually interested in yukiyuko, nor of boys below the age of puberty.) The rule holds against all yukiyukos, near or distant, except where blood brothers are involved who have a tremendous love and trust in each other. Breaking of the rule by blood brothers was observed, but not by tribal brothers.

593 583 587 There is still another method by which the junior levirate operates. A wawa often gives one or two of his younger wives to yukiyuko. These wives may merely be those promised by a gawel and for whom wawa has made presents (wawa would be forced to obtain permission from gawel in this case); or wawa may give yukiyuko wives he has already lived with, in which circumstances permission need not be asked.

If wawa has four or five wives, he may say to a single yukiyuko, "You see that one—you take her and feed her." Yukiyuko usually says, if wawa is an old man, "No, you are an old man. I'll wait until you die, then I'll have them all." Wawa replies, "No, you take her now, yukiyuko. I have many wives and you have none." Yukiyuko then takes her, and she belongs to him permanently. Wawa loses all right to her sexually and economically, and she cannot be returned to him. If yukiyuko died, his new wife would go to his younger brother, even though he were not consanguine but only tribal.

Ordinarily a man would present his younger brother with a wife if particularly pleased with some exploit of yukiyuko's, such as the successful termination of a punitive expedition against common enemies.

593 583 628 587 One of Warlumbopo's older brothers (actual) had been ambushed and mortally wounded by a tribal yukiyuko.

Shortly after this Warlumbopo walked into the camp of the dying man. Warlumbopo wailed for his dead brother. He refused to allow the wives of the dead man to bury him until he had killed the slayer of his wawa, when he returned to his dead brother and buried him.

When Daurlung, an older brother to Warlumbopo and younger to the dead man, heard the news he said, "We'll get all our Ritarngo people

1: Warner E-5 (1926-1929) 1937
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and go fight them." "No," said Warlumbopo. He had not told Daurlung of his killing their brother's slayer since the latter had been a good friend of Daurlung's. Daurlung said, "Yes, we must go kill our brother's slayer." "You can't kill him now." "Why?" "He's dead." "Who killed him?" "I did." "My own brother! Good! I'll give you two of my wives."[5]

This episode not only illustrates the operation of the junior levirate during the life of an older brother, but shows clearly the solidarity among a group of consanguine brothers and its lack between "far-off" brothers.

Wawa always is at the head of a family of brothers and has the strongest voice in their affairs if the father is very old or dead. However, if wawa is not of an assertive type, whereas one of the younger brothers is, the latter could hold equal authority with him and frequently would have the final decision on any problem that confronted them.

The oldest brother, who has the rights of ceremonial leadership for certain of the clan and moiety ceremonies, usually has the next oldest help him, and they confer over ceremonial matters on an almost equal basis; but, given two personalities of equal strength, the older would be by virtue of his age the more powerful in family affairs.

Usually two brothers cooperate in making a canoe, since of all economic labors this is the most difficult and extends over the greatest period of time. A canoe, too, has the highest economic value of all the Murngin's technological articles. Wawa has the most control over the canoe, although yukiyuko, if a man of will, may have an equal say in its management. If it were traded to another group, all the brothers would feel they had an ownership in it, even if they had not helped make it.

The brothers usually have an equal right to the property of each, although it is definitely known that a spear, a club, a basket, or any other such article belongs to one man and not to the group. A dog is known to belong to one man; yet the other brothers have a feeling of secondary ownership, and the dog recognizes them as secondary masters, much as with us a boy may own a dog and receive primary obedience and loyalty from his pet, while his brothers are secondary masters. These latter would look upon the dog as their brother's, but as "ours" in relation to outsiders.

If a son of one brother dies, the others always join in the ceremonial

[5] There is a full account of this incident in Warlumbopo's life as a warrior in the chapter on warfare, pages 177-190.

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underlies this most fundamental lateral relationship. Given the correlated basic complex of the junior levirate, by which the next eldest brother inherits a dead man's wife, it would be impossible not to have polygyny; and it is rather difficult to see how the entire system of kinship could exist without the levirate in some form. 605 595

A man always tries to obtain his actual mother's brother's daughter; if he cannot get her, he tries to marry someone as near to her in consanguinity as possible. 605 582

Usually an older male dué and male galle have an understanding that their sons and daughters shall marry. Such a betrothal could occur before the birth of either child. Sometimes a gawel will promise his wife's next daughter to his waku. Thus, even before birth there is a recognized relationship between dué and galle. 605 584

There are several degrees of marriage. As soon as a boy is circumcised and old enough to understand and remember what is told him, his galle is pointed out. At a similar age a galle mielk has her dué diramo shown to her. This is done by the male parents of both children.

The young men and women older than the two usually tease the young couple with somewhat obscene jokes about their relationship and its meaning in their physical behavior. The youngsters are usually shy and ashamed when confronted with such humor; however, as small children, when away from the elders, they play house together. They are fully aware of the sexual act and of sex differences. [831] [864] [857]

About the time facial hair appears upon a boy and the breasts of a girl swell, that is, when sexual intercourse is in their power and of interest to both, they start making love trysts in the bush. They may not copulate at first, but they simulate the act in close contact. 605 835 836

When a girl has her first menses the mother and older women put her inside a house (no special one) and leave her. She is supposed to remain in one place and move with digging sticks as crutches. This represents the myth of the two old women who made the present world, walking with the aid of digging sticks; the older of the two was menstruating. It is believed that menstruation is due to the sexual act, and that the blood is not dangerous to a woman since it comes from the abdomen and not the heart. 841

When a girl's first menses are over, her father (gawel to her dué) says to her mother (mokul to her dué), "You go make a house for them and fix a camp for them. She is big enough now" (see page 129). 583

After this, a young couple start living together and are recognized

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as husband and wife. They have been copulating before, frequently with the knowledge of the father and mother, but the latter pretend ignorance.

Usually an older man with a wife or two acquires a young woman in her adolescent period. A young girl often starts living in her husband's household before menstruation. The dué usually takes her for fear of having her stolen from her parents by some other dué. He has no intercourse with her during this period. When the girl is old enough he may without ceremony start actual intercourse. Or he may take her out into the bush on the ruse that they are going fishing. He asks her to get some drinking water or some wood. While she is gone he ties a small piece of opossum fur string around his index finger, and when she comes back he asks her to lie down. He places the finger inside her vagina; then they return to camp, and sexual intercourse starts. This minor ceremony is not frequently practiced.

When an older man takes a pre-adolescent girl he helps the mother perform the ceremony at her first menstruation. After this is over the husband paints her with red ochre (this is always done for mourners after the death of a relative to avoid ceremonial uncleanliness, and is used in ceremonies).

Ordinarily there is but little taboo on a menstruating woman. She sleeps in the same house or camp with her husband, though the couple do not copulate. The only restriction in daily life is that no man would allow a wife or any other woman to go out in a canoe with him during this period, for otherwise the great mythical snake, Bapa Indi (the Great Father), would swallow them all. The story is told that not so long ago a man took his two wives in a canoe for a trip from one island to another. One of them was menstruating. When they had gone for a short time Yurlunggur (Bapa Indi) smelt the unclean odor, came out of the subterranean depths, and swallowed them all. This modern folk tale, which is believed by all Murngin, fits into the tribe's most fundamental myth of the two old creator sisters.

The above describes how a man ordinarily obtains a wife and what usually happens; but often a woman is not taken from her parents for some time because her future husband may be away in the country of a more distant clan. Various men may also dispute the right to her, owing to a gawel's exceeding his rights by promising her to several men, or because of a wrong marriage of the mokul or gawel, with the true gurrong of mokul demanding the daughter and the true waku of gawel claiming her. If the marriage had been according to

1: Warner E-5 (1926-1929)1937
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831 The woman's attitude will be illustrated under the head of runaway unions.

836 If a man had a sweetheart in his early youth and the affair terminated after he had acquired his proper mates, he must always feed
514 her if she comes to his camp, and she must always feed him if he goes to hers. Wives, however, always complain and cause trouble for the
578 man who tries to follow this custom because of their jealous fear that he may return to the affair. They are anything but hospitable to a husband's former sweetheart who visits their camps. An understanding husband will allow hospitality, particularly if he and his wife's former lover are good friends and if there has been no early trouble between the two. Otherwise, the husband, too, would forbid a wife to feed her former paramour.

836 Lovers' unions often develop into permanent ones. If there is a dis-
584 pute about a girl between two young men, one of whom has been living with her, it is likely that, all else being equal, the lover would
583 get the girl, for, say the old men, "They were sweethearts." If the woman should be given to the other man, the lovers frequently run away, and the tribe later recognizes the union.

837 A number of customs are connected with sweethearting. At night the husbands generally make their wives sit in their own camps. A favorite time for the assignation of lovers, therefore, is during the day when the women are accessible out in the bush and mangrove jungle, where they gather bulbs and shellfish—in groups for companionship and for fear of being stolen. The young man sneaks up near her and taps a stone on the ground. The woman is on the alert and knows what this means. She tells her companions that she is thirsty, or with some other excuse slips away to join her lover.

Sometimes a man has a woman friend—always a woman—drop a certain type of string in the loved one's basket. If the woman belongs to the Yiritja moiety and the man to the Dua he puts an opossum fur string into it; if he is Yiritja and she Dua, he uses a red parrot feather string. This, of course, occurs only after he feels fairly confident that his advances will have a favorable reception. She replies through her woman friend, and arrangements are made for a time and place.

578 The following is an account of the operation of this custom, its
837 failure, the feelings of the relatives involved, and the general camp scene during trouble over adultery. Such camp brawls are not infre-

1: Warner E-5 (1926-1929)1937
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578 837 "Let us go back and fight him," he said. The two took their spears and went. "Why do you keep on saying I try to lie with your wife? I didn't." Narnarngo called Bengaliwe "deindumeiu" (big testicles). Bengaliwe replied by calling Narnarngo "golitchirtommeru" (big kidneyed). Both terms designate a man who would break all laws of sexual behavior.

When Benaitjimaloi heard the quarrel he came over with his four brothers and stood back of Narnarngo to help him. He is true galle to Narnarngo. Other near male relatives joined each side and a new camp brawl was in progress. No one was killed or very much hurt in the fight that followed. It was later ascertained that a small boy, unaware of the string's significance, had taken it out of Bengaliwe's and placed it in Djowa's wife's basket.

837 43 Sometimes a woman attempts to seduce a young man into joining her for a lovers' assignation. She usually starts by sending him food. After these presents have been given for a while and he is sure of their meaning, he usually tells the woman who brings them for her friend to tell the other woman where he will meet her. If they have an assignation, he usually makes presents to her. Sometimes young men are so bashful that it takes much persuasion to force them into such a union.

583 837 626 628 A runaway marriage differs from a union caused by a man's stealing a woman in that the woman gives her consent; such an arrangement has the consent of neither her people nor his; whereas in the case of theft, a man's own people frequently support him, particularly if there has been hard feeling between the two clans and a conscious rivalry for the women of certain groups. The runaway union usually ends in his and her people attempting to send her back to her true dué, because it would lead to armed trouble between the man's people and the members of the right dué's clan, and also for the woman's people if they did not condemn the act by helping the true dué regain his wife. However, no man's clan would desert him in such a situation to the point of allowing him to be killed or attacked by the injured man's group. Ordinarily, such a situation ends in a "growling" match, in which the two sides stand armed behind the two opponents, the lover allowing the injured husband to have the better of the cursing. Sometimes such a runaway marriage leads to permanent union.

583 837 After a couple have been lovers for some time they may be so fond of each other as to risk everything and leave their own kin and go to a distant clan. Her people, the husband's gawel and galle, immediately help the injured spouse to regain his wife. The people of their groups

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generally frown upon the lovers' attempt. Further, her people consider it an affront to them by the people of her lover's clan, and it is necessary for them to protest that they had nothing to do with the matter and show good faith by helping get her back. A woman or a man can take the initiative in a runaway marriage, but most of the cases recorded were due to the influence of the woman.

Monalli had been the lover of another's wife. He had had trouble and had decided to return to his own clan. When he left, the wife went with him. He protested, when apprehended, that he did not want her and had asked her to remain with her own husband. The woman herself, although it meant a merciless beating, admitted she was the guilty one and still asked to be allowed to follow him.

Inyinyerri, a fine looking young man, ran away with Raiola's mokul rumeru (sister to the actual one) because they had been having an affair and because her dué's people had stolen Inyinyerri's own father's wives and he wished to even the mark. Inyinyerri's people protested that it would cause too much trouble, and he sent her back. A neutral man was given an opossum string with a loop at one end which was put over her head; and she was led to her gurrong, who brought her to her husband. When he accepted the string it was realized that he wanted her; had he cut the string it would have meant that he did not want her.

It occurs, but unusually, that a man who is stealing, or running away with, a woman uses the head circlet to take her.

If a galle mielk ran away and her father failed in forcing her back, it would be mandatory upon him to provide the dué (his waku) with a new galle. If he could not, he would try to help him obtain another and make presents to him for the loss. The same proceedings are gone through if a man's wife is childless.

If a husband runs away from his wife she goes to his people, usually to her mokul bapa (mother-in-law), for protection, and remains with the man's parents until his people bring him back, or she is given to a younger brother who is nearest of kin.

The author has recorded instances of a man's freely giving up his wife after she had run away.

Daoper, a youngster sixteen or eighteen years old, had a wife of about thirty-five who ran away with another. Her people brought her back to him. Her brother gave her a thorough beating, as did the husband, but the latter said, "He can have her, she causes me too much trouble. She's too old for me."

A custom halfway between a lovers' arrangement and a runaway

1; Warner E-5 (1926-1929)1937
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586 union is illustrated by the action of two former lovers when the man, to obtain tribal recognition of his taking the woman to wife, walks into the husband's camp and takes her away. The husband always shows fight, but his people on this occasion stop him. There is a considerable interval before the next step, the new couple meanwhile going away to another country. When the three meet again the former husband comes over to their camp, eats with them, and accepts presents of food or the man's totemic emblem, signifying that they are friends, that he recognizes the rights of the new dué and has given up his own. This very seldom happens, for a man's importance in society rests largely on the large number of galle who bear him many children and gather quantities of food during the great tribal ceremonies. It would only occur when he and the old men of his clan had become bored with the actions of the woman and did not wish to kill her.

583 578 Although many customs, such as the use of a string to bring back or take a runaway woman, apply also to the stealing of women, the latter method of acquiring a woman nevertheless occupies a rather different place in the tribal life and local organization. If a woman is found to be really to blame, there frequently is no further trouble; but if it is believed she has been definitely stolen, difficulties are to be expected. The theft of a man's galle by a member of a rival clan is a recognized method of insulting all the members of the legal husband's clan. The clan into which she is taken consider it wrong but justifiable and it pleases them that their enemies have lost the woman.

Still another method of securing women—by ambush—differs from woman-stealing only in that the husband is first killed; capture is not the object of the fight except as retaliation for an earlier theft of women. The writer has recorded instances of a group of clans acquiring five or six women by this means.

582 584 The gift of a daughter to a far-off dué has two forms, according to the recognition given it by the tribe. If a gawel has no near waku, he is forced to find a man considerably removed from him in this relationship, and all the people feel that he has done right; but if a gawel has a near waku and gives his daughter to a distant one, the near waku's people feel that they have been treated unfairly. If they are a strong clan they force her return. In any case, there is a feeling of uncertainty about the marriage, and her husband is apprehensive of her being taken away by her near dué. Sometimes a man gains permission from his waku to give his daughter to a distant one, because of a complex of circumstances, such as: (1) the weakness of the near

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582 by the dué-galle (husband and wife) relationship, for there lies the
601 basis of the social system's lateral structure. In brief, ego obtains from his mother's brother a woman with whom he copulates and creates a

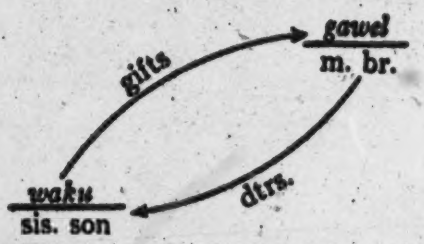

CHART IV.—THE DAUGHTER AND GIFT RECIPROCATION BY THE SON-IN-LAW AND FATHER-IN-LAW

new family; ego reciprocates by giving presents to his mother's brother.
[563] More generally, a group of brothers are always giving presents to another group of brothers for their daughters, while the first group of brothers are receiving presents for *their* daughters from still another group of brothers.

This can be symbolized with the pattern shown in Chart IV.

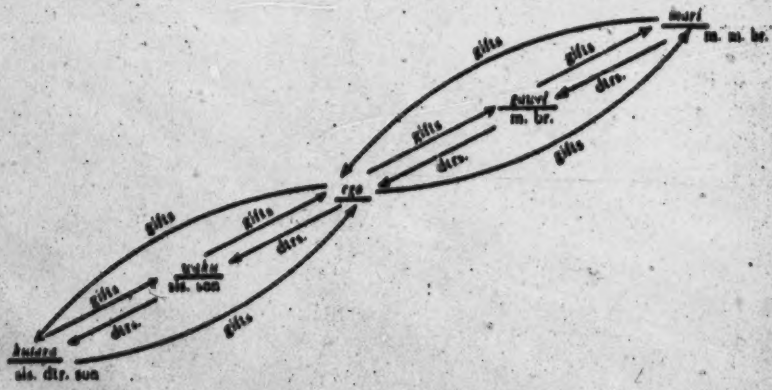

CHART V.—STRUCTURAL ANALYSIS OF THE GIFT AND DAUGHTER EXCHANGE

This diagonal reciprocation creates a line of five relatives running diagonally up from the second descending generation (kutara) to the second ascending generation (mari), who are forever exchanging women and presents.

In Chart V this reciprocation has been presented so as to show the

2: Berndt E-5 (1946-1950) 1955
O117 Murngin O117

analysis of this section of Warner's system omits consideration of EGO's sister's position, and does not take into account the compensatory factors involved in EGO's own marriage. To understand equilibrium (or for that matter disequilibrium) in a kinship system of this kind, to understand the ramification of compensatory factors, we must consider EGO as an adult, for it is his child-producing potentiality which is important.

B. *Asymmetrical Nature of System.* When an EGO marries, certain individuals become involved. For discussion we may diagram as in Table 2, on the basis of Leach.

That is, EGO receives a wife from C group. His group B (i.e., all members of it), with his MARI group (principally his own MARI), i.e., CC, aid him in accumulating gifts which will be given to C group. These gifts go principally

TABLE 2

into the hands of EGO's wife's father. A division is then made by this GALWAL, who gives presents to the group of his daughter's MARI (the NGADIWALGUR, CCC), who is incidentally his own W.M.B. and of the line of his own MARI; the remaining goods are distributed throughout the GALWAL's *babaru*.

When EGO's sister marries, certain individuals become involved: the same principle is involved here as above.

On a wider range, the compensatory factors involved can be diagrammed (see Table 3). As one may see by a glance at this diagram, the distribution of goods and services (in the form of reciprocal duties) between persons within the two moieties which contain the local groups is unequal. (I am not considering here the question of intangibles.) The only way in which they might be regarded as equal would be to classify all the groups of one moiety as against all the groups of the opposite moiety. Now this may be done in practice, so that any inequalities are wiped out.

What is, however, revealed by Table 3 is the chain of duties which links a man with his MARI, his obligations to his wife's F., and the latter's to his daughter's MARI. That is to say, the main principle, which is simple enough, and which governs the system, is that the MARI, as the most important of all EGO's relatives, because of the emotional bond existing between the two, because of his general identification with EGO's own patri-line, aids his grandson (his Sr.D.S.) upon his betrothal; but he does not aid his sr.d.d., for through her (EGO's sister) he receives his compensation. A M.B. receives compensation

2: Berndt E-5 (1946-1950) 1955
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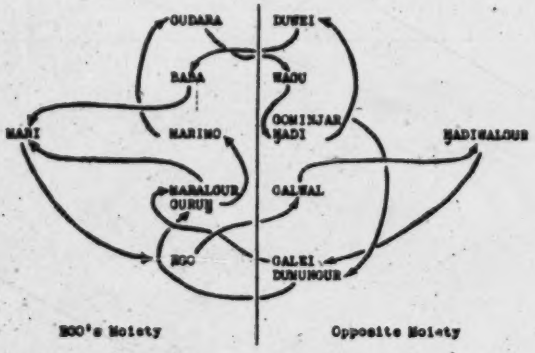
on the marriage of his daughter, but part of this must always go to the latter's MARI. The key positions, then, are those of GALWAL and MARI—the M.B. and M.M.B.; they may be viewed by an EGO as positions of superior status.

Table 3, however, demonstrates the asymmetrical nature of the kinship system. It will be noticed that those in the second ascending generation are receivers and givers (note incoming and outgoing arrows), but the MARI receives more than he gives. This is counterbalanced by his sister's marriage with NGADIWALGUR, when the diagram begins to repeat itself in order to ensure a flow of goods from the outside—that is to say, to ensure that a "spread" or a coverage of a number of groups is made where marriages are

TABLE 3



concerned. There will not in reality be identification of groups within one moiety: it will necessarily be unstable (i.e., as Leach has observed, 1951:52, any system of balances will be unstable).

Or consider the same problem between wife-givers and wife-receivers (Table 4). Three groups are found on *X* side and two on *Y* side: EGO receives his wife from his GALWAL, who in turn receives his wife from his GALWAL, EGO's M.M.B. These symbolize the descent lines of inheritance discussed above. These *X* and *Y* lines are recurrent through the generations, i.e., the MARI (e.g.) receives his wife from his M.B. in the generation level above him. Seniority in status does not depend on a man's giving his d. to a male in the generation below; it is ascribed to him through seniority and position in his relevant generation level. A MARI will always have a higher status than a GALWAL, and the latter than an EGO. Such relationships are implicit, not only in the kinship situation, but throughout social life.

C. *Local Descent Group-Line versus Descent Line.* We may now return to the crux of our problem and examine the term "local descent group" or "local line," which Leach has used in preference to "descent line."

The "local lines" would be, according to Leach (1951:33), CC, B, C, CC'

2: Berndt E-5 (1946-1950) 1955
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ritual occasions. Nevertheless, and notwithstanding their binding ritual and economic obligations, the descent group as such is the only unit to which one may turn to obtain aid which will be given more or less automatically. 613

As Leach has said (1951:53), "the network of kinship relations embraces a great number of local groups [corporate descent groups] and ties them into a kind of loosely knit political system; but throughout the population so linked there is no strong sense of social solidarity and in some cases there are even wide differences of language [as among the linguistic groups] and culture [not in this case, however] between different parts of the one system." That is to say, the usual characteristics of tribal organization are lacking; and it is for that reason that these people of eastern Arnhem Land belong to what I have called the Wulamba bloc, speaking a number of related dialects of one language which in toto are referred to as Miwoidj. 197 613 619 [184]

V. CONCLUSIONS

The Wulamba material carries a number of general theoretical implications. These concern primarily, in this context, the corporate or unilineal descent group. The minimal propositions discussed by Leach (1951:52–53) mainly refer to the question of relationship between wife-givers and wife-receivers, and the differentiation of status. These arguments regarding the relevance of status concepts to the analysis of "bride-price" (i.e., bride-wealth) and dowry have not been followed up to any extent here. The status concepts which do exist in Wulamba social life, and are reflected in their kinship system, are those dependent on seniority and reinforced by ritual and sacred ceremony. Other factors linked with status considerations are the prestige attaching to fighting ability, to proficiency in magic, and to parenthood as such. Status derived from these sources need not coincide with ritual and ceremonial status, nor with status associated with seniority in a descent group or a linguistic group. Nevertheless, discussion of all these features would be relevant in any detailed study of kinship and social organization (see Sharp 1934:418–20). But status dependent on being a "wife-receiver" or "wife-giver" is to my mind not relevant. A man's status is not necessarily derived from or enhanced by his being a "wife-giver." It so happens that the "wife-giver" will be socially "superior" (although the term "superior" has connotations which I do not think are applicable here), but he is possessed of this status whether or not he accedes to the expectation that he will give his daughter to his Sr.S. I admit, however, with Leach, that a more detailed analysis is necessary of the economic aspects of the effects of matrilateral cross-cousin marriage. As he states (1951:45), "the reciprocities of kinship obligation are not merely symbols of alliance, they are also economic transactions, political transactions, charters to rights of domicile and land use."[6] 114 554 554 606 [114] [582 583]

Leach points out that when Kachin-type marriage (and presumably Wulamba marriage) occurs—i.e., matrilateral cross-cousin marriage—it is part of the political structure. Now this may certainly be the case among the Kachin, or among certain African groups, but is it the case among the Wulamba? Our 114

2: Berndt E-5 (1946-1950) 1955
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[4] I would not say, however, that Thomson's material (1949) on ceremonial economic exchange fills many gaps, if any, in Warner's data (see Leach 1951:34). It is obvious, I think, both from his material and from ours, that exchanges of this nature between M.B. and Sr.S. comprise merely one element in a wide system of economic exchanges. Goods travel backwards and forwards through the network of cognatic relationships, against a background of linked and allied linguistic groups, in a traditionally prescribed fashion, between certain specified kin, passing outside the periphery of the Wulamba bloc into and from alien Aboriginal or European (or Indonesian, as before) channels. Such exchanges consist of specified objects or commodities, which move in different directions across the surface of the whole country; but this is only one aspect relevant to the total kinship system.

Also, I would agree with Leach (p. 52) that in a marriage exchange the equivalent of a woman is not only another woman, and that the equivalent of a woman may be found not only in goods and labor and symbolic objects. Certain intangibles can play a part—and these may involve prestige, rights, services, and perhaps status. Little work, as yet, has been done in consideration of these. Reciprocal exchanges between males and females, or between females, should also be discussed in much greater detail, for these are not just reflections of exchanges between male partners. It is not satisfactory to consider an EGO as being always a male, as has been done in most discussions of kinship systems. Where prestations occur between male and female kin, these seem to conform with traditional patterns; but between female kin (i.e., among the Wulamba), this is not so apparent.

[5] Radcliffe-Brown (1931:4–5) calls the local group a horde: he states that each horde is independent and autonomous, managing its own affairs and acting as a unit in its relations with other hordes (however, see pp. 28, 106). Elkin (1938:39–41, 73–74) discusses the local group: it is, he tells us, an enlarged family, consisting of a man and his living descendants in the male line; such a group can be a local patrilineal clan. Elkin then draws a distinction between the local group and the horde, which is as we have defined it above. In fact his statements would, I think, agree with our own here.

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10: Warner E-5 (1926-1929) 1958
OI17 Murngin OI17

Wongar men, things would have been different. Both the men and the women were Dua. They were incestuous. It was like a brother and sister being together. Those two sisters left that country, one pregnant and the other menstruating. If they had not done this, this cycle would never have happened. Everyone and all plants and animals would have stayed single. But after the Wawilak sisters had done this they made it the law for everyone (pages 250-251).

When I was a small boy I walked about single. One day my gawel came to me and said, "Look at me. I am your gawel. You must give me kangaroo and turtle and spears. By and by I will give you my gatu mielk" (pages 93-98).

I gave him spears and spear-throwers, hair belts, and all kinds of food because he would give me his daughters. When I first started making presents to him for my wife, my younger brothers all helped me. By and by, when they get ready to have a wife, I shall help them make presents to their gawels. My gawel gave my father presents of spears and food, and he also gave my arndi presents because I was her son and because she is my gawel's sister.

We like our wives' fathers very much. Suppose my gawel and my father quarrel and suppose they fight. I can do nothing. I cannot help my father. I cannot help my father-in-law. I must do nothing. They are all the same to me. I must try to stop any fight.

All men try to get plenty of wakus in other countries. This is because they send presents to their gawels. They send things that aren't in this country. This country, where we are now, has no stone. Relatives here send presents to the Ritarngo country for stone spear heads. They send bamboo to the Goyder River people for it. Some others have no white clay and they send to other countries for it. Fathers-in-law and sons-in-law are the people who do this (pages 95-96).

Sometimes a no-good gawel promises his daughter to three wakus. All these "half" sons-in-law give presents to him. They all think they are going to get that girl. By and by one gets her. This means a big row. The other two want to fight this lucky one, and they always fight the father of the girl because he has been two-faced. They think this gawel maybe is a little bit crazy. Sometimes two or three boys, when they are all trying to get a girl, see that her father is no good and they all quit.

When a man marries a woman his father-in-law tells him to take good care of her. When a man has two daughters from his father-in-law, sometimes the old man comes and says to him, "It is better that I give your younger brother this next girl." The older brother says, "Yes, you tell him

10: Warner E-5 (1926-1929) 1958
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Sometimes a man and a woman run away because they like each other too much. This is a bad thing. Marriages should be arranged properly and people should do things that we do here when things are right. No one here likes runaway marriages. When people like each other too much it always makes trouble for all their relatives and for them (pages 86-88).

Some women stay no good. A man can give them a good hiding and what do they do? They go straight away and look for a new sweetheart. They are all the same as someone with an evil spirit in their heads.

HIS CHILDREN

When my son was born, I was very happy. Many moons before I had come back from a Djungguan python dance. I went to sleep by my campfire and had a dream. In the dream the spirit child came to me and said, "I am bringing something from Wongar to you. I am looking for my mother." I said to him, "Where do you come from?"

He said, "I came from your totem well. I am bringing a barrimundi fish for you" (pages 67-69).

I got up and walked around in the morning time. I went down close to the water along the beach. I saw a large barrimundi floating on the water. When he came close up, the tide threw this fish right up on the sand bank. I looked at him. His tail was moving. I thought quickly, "Oh, this one is from that dream." That fish was all the same as dead when I came up close. I took my spear-thrower, hooked it inside his mouth, and pulled him all the way along through the water and carried him back to camp. I left him there. I called out to a man. "You come help me," I said. "Come help carry this fish and get a fire ready."

The man said, "You lift him up yourself."

I said, "No, he is too big for me."

We two carried the barrimundi back to camp. We cooked him. One man cooked the liver and tasted it. He said, "It is very sweet and very fat but tastes very different."

I said, "Yes, it is different. I dreamed this one."

We started next day for a ceremony. We danced all night. We danced for over a moon.

Before my daughter came I did not dream at first. One day I was out hunting turtles. I saw a little bird. It was like a little fish in the sea. The little bird flew on one side of me and then the other. I heard him say, "Wheell Wheel!" It was all the same as the wind in the trees. I thought then, "This is a spirit after me." I went ashore. I slept and I dreamed. This little bird came to me in the dream and said, "Father, I have come to you. Where is my mother?"

15:Chaseling M-5 (ca. 1934-1936)1957
OI17 Murngin OI17

567 578 groups by their fire, cooking fish and waiting for their wives and mothers to come with food and firewood. For an hour or more Damilipi, the oldest of Yakangaiya's wives, partially blind, stark naked, and switching flies with a bunch of twigs, strode up and down haranguing and insulting her men, accusing them of cowardice and laziness in not raiding their [628] hereditary enemies and continuing a feud which was dying by mutual consent. Damilipi's campaign was continued for two days, and as other women joined her the horde was roused to the point of organizing a killing party. Weeks later the men attacked, and in the reprisals two of Damilipi's sons and a daughter-in-law were killed.

• 583 [582] Wives may be acquired by bestowal, by the passing on of widows, or by theft or capture. Bestowal is the most frequent method, and tribal law provides that a woman must marry her father's sister's son or, should this be impracticable, an equally well-defined alternate husband is provided. Relationships are ageless, and if there are no women in the right marriage-relationship a man not infrequently remains a bachelor till a woman is captured or an elderly widow is available.

Peculiarities result from the practice of bestowal, in that a man does not acquire a mother-in-law by marrying her daughter, but conversely he marries a daughter because her mother has always been his mother-in-law. Several brothers may have the same mother-in-law, who may not have enough daughters for them all, and this gives rise to the practice of promising even an unborn wife to a prospective husband. 'Inipi' is a rite whereby an acceptable son-in-law takes the sebum from his cheek by the side of his nose and anoints the abdomen of his mother-in-law, sometimes while she is still in her infancy, and thereafter all her children come under the special care of the son-in-law, who makes presents to her sons and marries her daughters. By the Inipi rite, one of several brothers may have prior claims and obtain several

15:Chaseling M-5 (ca. 1934-1936)1957
OII7 Murngin OII7

wives from the same woman, though his brothers remain in bachelor solitude. 583

Dangatji, who had a small daughter, went to the youthful Geitpapoi and made a proposal: 'I have a daughter who some day will marry; she cannot marry you, because she is your tribal mother-in-law, but her daughter will be in the right relationship for marriage. If you want my unborn granddaughter, let us come to an understanding. If you start making payments through my daughter I will see that eventually you get her daughter.' Geitpapoi closed on the deal immediately, and performed the rite of Inipi on his infant mother-in-law, through whom he cheerfully made frequent payments to Dangatji of spears, stone axes, dilly-bags, and food. In time the mother-in-law grew up, Dangatji settled her marriage, and she was taken off to her husband's territory where her first child, a son, was born. Geitpapoi kept up his payments, though no longer to Dangatji, but to the mother-in-law's husband, in the hope that eventually she would produce him a wife. When a daughter was born, the mother sent a message to Geitpapoi: 'Son-in-law, your wife has now arrived; I will mind her for you until she grows up, but I need more food, and further presents.' All these were forthcoming from a gratified Geitpapoi, who brought the best of his food to his mother-in-law and made frequent presents to his tribal father-in-law.

Having served for over twenty years for a wife, Geitpapoi came to claim her, and his mother-in-law prepared the bridal camp. Three fires were lit on the beach, and that night Geitpapoi and his bride slept between two of them whilst the mother-in-law slept on the outside. A mother-in-law stays with the young wife, who is said to be timid and afraid of her husband; she will not so much as speak to him but confines her remarks to her mother, in her husband's hearing. Such timidity is often genuine, and continues for 585

15:Chaseling M-5 (ca. 1934-1936)1957
OI17 Murngin OI17

585 a week or ten days, till the husband takes her away to the bush, where they set up camp by themselves.

583 All negotiations for wives do not run smoothly, for if a prospective husband's horde quarrels with the horde of the father-in-law, the Inipi agreement will probably lapse, or if one tribal son-in-law offers better payment than another, the result is not hard to foresee. Our house-boy, Naradjin, wanted to buy a wife, but the father of the girl, though considering his suit and receiving gifts from him, was also negotiating with Baradjuna, who, despite being sixty years old and having eleven wives, had performed the Inipi rite and expected the girl to come to him. Both men stood in the correct tribal relationship to the girl, and the problem deteriorated into a question of who had the greater influence. At one stage, Baradjuna took the girl and cleared out, and the argument would probably have ended there had not the girl run back to her father. Tribal hostilities in a distant but related horde caused the breaking off of diplomatic relations with Baradjuna, and the balance finally swung in favour of Naradjin when the girl's father, in a moment of wrathful indignation, bestowed his daughter upon him.

589 An aboriginal marries all the widows, childless or otherwise, of his deceased blood or tribal brother. Every woman usually stands in the relationship of wife to a number of men who are tribal brothers. She marries one of them and, if he dies, she and her children automatically enter the camp of another brother who has always been her tribal husband as well as a tribal father to her children. For this reason a man does not know the number of wives and half-grown children he is likely to acquire through the deaths of brothers, and irrespective of his personal views, desires or efforts toward obtaining a family, he has little say in the matter. Fortunately Stone Age women are not burdensome, for they are food-gatherers, and children are their responsibility.

583 Natural affinity between youths and the young wives of

15:Chaseling M-5 (ca. 1934-1936)1957
OI17 Murngin OI17

old men often results in 'Murramburr' or marriage-by-theft, 583
for if a young man cannot obtain a wife by peaceful means he sometimes attempts to capture women. Gwaipiji wanted a wife, so he considered the daughters of his tribal mothers-in-law, but he found that they were all married to tribal husbands. Turning his attention to one of them, he decided to steal her, so he went to her husband's country and waited till the women were hunting, and then he forced the girl to go with him.

Bununggu, the girl's husband, resented the theft and told 684
his troubles to his brothers who were visiting a friendly 682
horde. He suggested that, as Gwaipiji was also friendly with them, he would eventually wander into their camp with the runaway wife, and they could then kill him and return the woman. They agreed to the proposal, so Bununggu camped with them till, in a few weeks, as he had anticipated, Gwaipiji arrived with the woman. Bununggu visited the erring couple and formally remonstrated with Gwaipiji: 'Why did you take my wife? She was never promised to you, whereas I have been paying for her for years. She is a good food-gatherer, and as I have no other wives I want her back.' But Gwaipiji also wanted the woman: 'All you say is true, but now that I have her I intend to keep her. I have no wives, all my mothers-in-law have disposed of their children, and I have no prospects of getting a wife. You, on the other hand, have three infants promised to you by the Inipi rite.'

Bununggu sat in silence as Gwaipiji thus signed his death warrant. He was not even listening, for he intended to kill Gwaipiji and recapture the woman. As the morning star rose and the camp was asleep, two youths came to Gwaipiji's fire and speared him in the back. Bununggu also blooded his spear, and in the resulting bedlam he dragged the woman to the side of his dying rival and made the customary speech over him, giving reasons for the attack, but more particularly